CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Postcolonialism and Literature of Diaspora

Postcolonialism as an intellectual discourse is inextricably tagged to the cultural legacies of colonialism and imperialism. The term ‘Postcolonialism’ as such implies the freedom and political emancipation of the colonized from the colonizers and examines the cultural activities used by the imperial powers to overpower the body and mind of the colonized people. It is the colonial mind that otherizes the colonized natives and has strangulated over the years their voice as inferior. The history of colonialism is itself associated with imperialism and exploitation of the marginalized so as to impose their dominant cultural hegemony and to make the colonized people feeble and voiceless. As a result of the politics of colonization, the natives were not only exploited economically, politically and culturally, but also lost their land to satisfy the thirst of the dominant for aggressive aggrandizement. In this connection, Dennis Walder (2005:2) holds that postcolonial consciousness entails and rather demands a double awareness of the colonial inheritance working within a specific culture, community and country and the changing relations existing between these communities, cultures and countries.

Ashis Nandy comes closer to Walder in his opinion that Colonialism not only suppressed the colonized countries economically, but also affected the psyche of the colonized people. He aptly articulates the hegemonizing outlook of the colonial mind through his observation that “west is now everywhere, within the West and outside, in
structure and mind” (1983: xi). It is now admittedly evident that Europeans imposed their superiority on the inferior colonized societies and that they were well known for imposing western culture on the colonized people so as to establish their cultural hegemony. In this connection, Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978:27) cogently argues that for the colonial masters of the West, the East is nothing but a place of ignorance. This attitude reveals that the superiority of the West suppresses the ability of the people of the East. He argues that the idea of the orient has been a powerful construct and the non-west has been viewed as ‘the other’ of the West. In colonial world this construct inspires the colonialists and Postcolonialism makes an attempt to study the significance of the processes that lead to the formation of ‘the other’. Said emphasizes power-knowledge binary relationship which is essential to identify and understand colonialism.

Postcolonialism has been defined as “a body of writing that attempts to shift the dominant ways in which the relations between western and non-western people and their worlds are viewed (R.Young, 1990:2). Young further maintains that postcolonialism appropriates the right of all the people on the globe equally. Here it is pertinent to mention that European colonization and appropriation of power brings divisions between the West/and the other and therefore Postcolonialism seeks to intervene, to force its alternative knowledge into the power structures of the west as well as the non-west. It seeks to change the way people think, the way they behave. It refuses “to acknowledge the superiority of western cultures.” (1990: 7).

Postcolonialism has been influenced by the Marxist thought of Michel Foucault who saw history in terms of power and also deconstruction, which has
challenged binary oppositions such as East/West and the notion of superiority that associated with each other. Frantz Fanon, the earliest decolonization theorist, holds in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) that “colonialism is a source of destruction and trauma for colonized peoples who are taught to look negatively upon their people, their *culture* and themselves” (227). He strongly felt that definite step for colonial people in finding a voice and an identity is to reclaim their own past (227).

The idea of a ‘postcolonial state’ came into vogue when the colonies got their freedom from the foreign rule and realized independent statehood following a period of subjugation. After independence, these states enjoyed the notion of nationhood which was hailed against the bondage of colonialism. However, the free postcolonial states still carry the dominant ego of colonialism in one way or the other under the influence of the neo-colonial politics, societies and cultures. The tragic burden of colonialism still persists, and the indigenous people are still treated with discrimination and amidst economic exploitation of the people on the basis of caste, community, colour, religion and language. It brings to memory the question of exploitation and revolt again and again and reinvents the modes of cultural perception by recording human relation among the colonial nations and marginalized people who were exploited by the colonial rule. It is therefore aptly observed that “post colonialism is a continuing process of resistance and reconstruction” (Ashcroft et al, 2006: 2) and that out of the experience of colonization, have emerged such studies as Subaltern Studies, Dalit Studies and Gender Studies that are fore-grounded upon the tension between the dominated and the dominant. One of the prime objectives of postcolonial studies is the appropriation of the place, rights and freedom of the people irrespective of their creed, colour and gender.
The study of postcolonialism is then a process of “self-apprehension” (Soyinka, 1976: xi).

Postcolonial theorists like, Homi K. Bhabha, John McLeod, Ania Loomba and Elleke Boemer highlight the necessity of contesting through resistance the Eurocentric hegemony and cultural imperialism in favour of the people living in the margin. Postcolonial theory establishes intellectual spaces for these marginalized people who raise their voices for themselves and produce cultural discourses by resisting colonial hegemony and cultural imperialism. Said interrogates Eurocentric discourse in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993: 402), by addressing the question of resistance by the natives. He argues that as it is one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons and exiles than ever before in history and most of them as an accompaniment to great post-colonial and imperial conflicts. Here, Said articulated the movements and migration of the people from their homelands as a central historical fact of colonization which introduced dramatic changes in the formation of ‘Third World’.

The question of identity constitutes another subject of Third World nation that pinpoints the way the colonized people identify themselves and also how the postcolonial authors claim to represent that identity. As Ania Loomba states, “Perhaps the connection between postcolonial writing and the nation can be better comprehended by better understanding that the nation itself is a ground of dispute and debate, site for competing imaginings of different ideological and political interest” (Loomba, 2007:207).
The decolonized people develop a post-colonial identity which has been articulated and celebrated by the postcolonial writers by maintaining the independent nation’s pragmatic connection with the Mother Country. In establishment of postcolonial identity, the writers explain and analyze the personal and social experiences of imperial subjugation of having endured the imposed identity of “a colonial subject”. For instance, Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958) describes the Nigerian experience of being part of the British Empire. Through the varieties of colonial languages, the anti-conquest narrative addresses the Mother Country’s cultural hegemony and by writing to the center, the natives create their own national histories to form and establish a national identity of decolonization.

In postcolonial literature, identity politics becomes an important issue in that the anti-conquest narrative analyses its social and cultural perspectives of the marginalized people. These social and cultural perspectives of the marginalised deal with the creative resistance to the culture of the coloniser and difficulties of establishment of the colonial society because of cultural resistance; how the colonizers developed their postcolonial identity; and how neo-colonialism employs the social relation to view the non-western world as inhabited by others. The neo-colonial discourse of geographical homogeneity blows together with the decolonized people, their cultures and their countries into an imaginary place called “The Third World”. Homi K Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994:113) indicates that the postcolonial world establishes the value of hybrid intellectual spaces where truth and authenticity move aside for ambiguity and challenges the ideological validity of colonialism.
As a re-reading process of colonial past, postcolonialism fascinated the art of migration and then globalization and transnationalism that offer different perspectives and interpretations. However, with decolonization, the movements of people have increased either through forced migration or voluntary reason and thus, a large scale of displacement or dispersal takes place and people scatter over various parts of the world. Propagation of religions is another important factor of migration. Colonial period witnessed migration due to war, slavery and imperial subjugation. People from colonized countries moved to other colonies as indentured laborers. The colonizers also captured the Africans and transported them as slaves. During the cold war era, people from Third world countries became refugees in UK, USA and other European countries. In Postmodern Age, migration is mainly prompted by economic interests. These migrants or displaced people while relocating themselves in an alien land, undergo traumatic experiences of alienation and become ‘hybrid’ individuals due to linguistic and cultural differences. In such a situation, their identity is challenged by the ambivalent nature of their existence. And therefore, it is necessary to introduce all the problems of migrancy and identity in postcolonial context.

Elleke Boehmer has tended to bring into focus the postcolonial migrant writers in her work *Colonial & Postcolonial Literature* and recorded the significant contribution of migrant writers in the field of postcolonial literature. Boehmer further notes that the postcolonial migrant writing is the writing of ‘in-between’ and their ‘cultural creolization’ becomes one of the factors that resulted on ‘linguistic creolization’. As a result, the English language has become a process of literary transplantation. Thus, the migrant writers have become members of the 21st century
“condition of energized migrancy” (2005:226). Therefore, Boehmer calls the postcolonial writer in the 21st century a ‘cultural traveler’ (227). Cultural and linguistic transformation of migrants has placed them in the position of being ‘not quite’ or ‘in-between’. By emphasizing migrants’ cultural and linguistic transformation, Boehmer puts forward the view that their works are marked by ‘hybrid objects’ (227). But migration is not synonymous with travel, because the latter implies movement between fixed positions, “a site of departure, a point of arrival that intimates an eventual return, a potential homecoming” (Chambers, 1994:5) which does not happen in case of migration. On the other hand, Salman Rushdie considers migration as a universal phenomenon that not only means displacement of people in history, but also refers to a state of displacement that falls on the path of all mankind. In his *Imaginary Homelands* Rusdie states: “We all cross frontiers; in that sense, we are all migrant peoples” (1991: 279).

Closely connected with migration and post colonial identity is Diaspora study, which constitutes an important subject in post colonial discourse with increasing popularity since the second half of the 20th century. ‘Diaspora’ is a concept that owes its origin to the ‘dispersion’ or exile of the Jews from their homeland (Israel). Originating from the idea of displacement from a homeland, diaspora points to those “communities of people who have been dislocated from their native homeland through the movements of migration, immigration, or exile (Braziel and Mannur, 2003: 1). Literally, it means dispersion or spreading of the people from a particular culture or nation. In ancient Greece, the term has been used for ‘dispersal of seeds’ and obviously referred to the migration of people from one place to another (Oxford English
The Webster Dictionary defines diaspora as ‘dispersion from’. Hence, the term implies the notion of a center, a home from where the dispersion occurs. Thus, the word necessarily invokes images of journey and displacement, wherein diasporic journey essentially implies putting down roots in other homes.

The history of Diaspora can be traced back to 586 BC, when the Babylonians conquered Judah, leading to the enslavement of Jews (Old Testament, Deut, xxvii: 25). It was considered to be the largest dispersal that lasted for more than eighteen hundred years, leading to the displacement of five million Jews. Jewish tradition says that God gave the land of Canaan (Israel) to Abraham where he lived along with his son Issac and grandson Jacob. Jacob’s twelve sons founded twelve tribes and they were enslaved under the Egyptian rule. The name Jew is derived from ‘Judah,’ one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The people of Israel moved from Egypt to Canaan and after forty-one years, they under the command of Joshua conquered the land of Canaan. Now, the people of Israel practiced the same language, culture and religion of the Jewish heritage that passed through generations starting with Abraham. The period of exile started in Babylonia after the destruction of Jerusalem. This exile came to an end after seventy years when Persians conquered Babylonia and allowed the Jews to return to Judah. But many Jews remained permanently to live in Babylonia and maintained their cultural identity, national spirit and religious tradition in a foreign land. This is considered to be the beginning of the Jewish diaspora. However, the real diaspora started when Romans put down Jewish revolt and destructed Jerusalem. After destruction of Jerusalem, many of the Jews joined the existing diaspora in Babylonia and others spread to the northern parts of Europe. Thus they were exiled from Judah by Babylonians and Jerusalem by
the Roman Empire. Their dislocation, homelessness and memories of their homeland became part of their ‘diasporic sensibility’.

The concept and meaning of diaspora has overlapped with many changes throughout the centuries. Now the term addresses the understanding of migration, people’s various sense of belonging and loyalties beyond the national boundaries. According to the development of postcolonial theories, the term ‘diaspora’ has been used in its modern sense. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin consider it as the central historical fact and define it as a “voluntary or forcible movement of people from their homeland into new regions. They consider colonialism as the diasporic movement, dispersion and settlement of Europeans all over the world” (2006:68).

The historian Sathis Georgouris, argues in his research article *The Concept of Diaspora in the Contemporary World* that historically diasporas are the results of migration because they don’t have to be bounded by the economic, political and historical limits of any state. They are always on the move seeking better gains as entrepreneurs. And it is this historical mobility and the ability to surpass the institutional operatives of capitalism that made them economically successful “diasporic entrepreneurial networks” (Georgouris, 2008:10). And this made them to stick together and form “the articulate image of social – ethnic cohesion” (10). He again asserts that diasporic communities should not be viewed as traces of a national community but rather as results of their own dispersal or mobility under specific historical conditions—political, economic, sociological, psychological and cultural. Even not every immigrant community is truly diasporic except those who share a strong ancestral center and
linkage with each other in their movements in the host lands. Georgouris gives as examples Jews, Greeks, and Armenian failing to extend his analysis outside Europe. Conceptually, diaspora highlights the existence of transnational networks of people and their sense of belonging in communities. In addition, diaspora implies that certain cultures continue to survive, transform and remain relevant even after the owners of the culture get physically dislocated from their homeland.

Though boundary-maintenance and preservation of identity are generally emphasized, there is a strong cross-current that emphasizes hybridity, fluidity, creolization, and syncretism. As Hall emphasizes “the diasporic experience is defined, not by essence or purity but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity or diversity; by a conception of identity which lives with and through hybridity” (1994: 235). Thus, there is a tension in the literature between boundary maintenance and boundary erosion.

In modern times, terms like trans-nationalism, post-nationalism, globalization, deterritorialization, post-colonialism, trans-culturalism and post-modernity are in vogue. They mark an epochal shift in our understanding of the term ‘diaspora’. It can be said that the world has now passed from the age of the nation-state to the age of diaspora. Martin Heidegger has rightly said in his ‘Letter on Humanism’ that “Homelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world” (1962:65).

In the terminological diversity, diaspora has been shaped systematically in academic discourse. Though the origin of diaspora traced back over centuries, but its importance and usage has varied over the years. The discussion on the term ‘diaspora’ and diasporic condition not only indicate a widespread interest in phenomena associated
with it, but also brings realization of the potential of the concept to serve as a theoretical
tool for the advancement of different perspectives in the study of human migration. As
Clifford points out “diasporic language seems to be replacing, or at least supplementing,
minority discourse. Transnational connections break the binary relation of ‘minority’

However, theorization of diaspora has emerged not only in cultural studies but
also in area studies, ethnic studies as a major site of contestation. Despite all its
privileged history, it has engaged to represent all movements, theorization of hybridity
and cross-cultural, multi ethnic dislocation. Theorists like Robin Cohen, William
Safran, Steven Vertovec and Tololyan have characterized diaspora in very many ways.
According to William Safran, ‘diasporic community’ seems to be increasingly used as
metaphoric designation for several categories of expatriates, expellees, political
refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities tout court
(Safran,1991: 83).

Diaspora doesn’t exclusively denote the exiled Jewish community, what
Safran calls the ‘ideal type’ (Safran, 1991:84), but denotes any community that
disperses from a single homeland. He argues that the concept of diaspora is linked to
those communities that share six characteristics on the basis of two variables- homeland
and exile. These characteristics are:

i. The original community has spread from a homeland to two or more countries;

ii. They are bound from their disparate geographical locations by a common vision,
memory or myth about their homeland.
iii. They have a belief that they will never be accepted by their host societies and therefore develop their autonomous cultural and social needs.

iv. They have a strong feeling that the ancestral homeland is the ‘true, ideal home’.

v. They or their descendants will return to the homeland when the conditions are appropriate

vi. They should be committed to the maintenance and restoration of their homeland and therefore the communal consciousness and solidarity enables them to continue these activities (83-84).

Thus Safran’s definition of diaspora provides basic assumption for the analysis of the term and emphasizes the cohesiveness of diaspora communities. His attempt to bring an ‘ideal type’ of diaspora stressed the transnational character of diasporas, the symbolic and material importance of a homeland and a vision of eventual return to it. However, other theorists have put forward different arguments while theorizing diaspora. Amitav Ghosh, for instance, puts forward an opposite view by arguing that the Indian diaspora is not predisposed to an attachment to and desire for a literal or symbolic return to the homeland as much as it is to recreate distinct culture in other locations (1989:78). Clifford also points out many of the inconsistencies. He writes: “there is something a slippage in the text between invocations of diaspora theories, diaspora discourses and distinct historical experiences of diaspora. Whatever the working list of diasporic features, no society can be expected to qualify on all counts, throughout its history. And the discourse of diaspora will necessarily be modified as it is translated and accepted. (1994: 302).
Robin Cohen (1997:24) has used the same perspectives of Safran that constitute an ideal type of diaspora by adding some other elements to it. He says that the definition of ‘diaspora’ needs to include those groups that scatter voluntarily or as a result of fleeing aggression, persecution or extreme hardship; take into account the necessity for a sufficient time period before any community can be described as a diaspora; recognize more positive aspects of diasporic communities. For instance, the tensions between ethnic, national and transnational identities can lead to creative formulation. Cohen acknowledges that diasporic communities not only form a collective identity in the place of settlement or with their homeland, but also share a common identity with members of the same ethnic communities in other countries. Cohen’s definition makes us to understand the term ‘diaspora’ and allows for wider application to varied situations. Such formulations of diaspora help to emerge the diasporic subjects that have homogenous, collective identities bound together by shared feelings of alienation and a very strong nostalgic longing for the place of origin. James Clifford (1994) points out that we must be wary of constructing our working definition to recourse to an ‘ideal type’ because even ‘pure’ forms “are ambivalent, even embattled over basic features” (306).

The constitutive of diaspora can be understood through three elements that are ‘dispersion in space’; ‘orientation to a homeland’ and ‘the boundary maintenance’. Dispersion is the most widely accepted criterion of diaspora which can be interpreted strictly as forced or traumatic dispersion. Any kind of dispersion in space that defines diasporas, includes ethnic communities which are divided by state frontiers or that segment of people living outside the homeland. The second constitutive criterion of
diaspora is orientation to a real or imagined homeland as a source of value, identity and loyalty and the third constitutive element of diaspora involves the preservation and maintenance of a distinctive identity. The mobilized diaspora for centuries has constituted a separate society. Boundaries are maintained by deliberate resistance to assimilation through self segregation and boundary maintenance is an indispensable criterion of diaspora. It enables one to speak of a diaspora as a distinctive community.

Robin Cohen (1997) distinguishes diaspora into five categories- Victim (Jews), labour (the Indian indenture labourer), trade (the Chinese), imperial (the British) and cultural (the Caribbean abroad). The first one becomes the victim of dispossession, the second type of diaspora moves in search of works, the third one emigrates for commercial purpose, the intension of the forth category is to motivate the colonial expansion and the last one experiences multiple displacement. Sudesh Mishra has classified it as ‘sugar and ‘masala’ diaspora in From Sugar to Masala: Writing by the Indian Diaspora (2003). He distinguishes between the old and the new diasporas by indicating that old diaspora experiences the semi-voluntary flight of indentured peasants to the non-metropolitan plantation colonies such as Fiji, Trinidad, Mauritius, South Africa, Malaysia, Surinam, and Guyana; on the other hand the late capital or postmodern dispersal of new migrants thrive for metropolitan centers such as Australia, the United States, Canada and Britain (276). These Indian immigrants and their descendents in different parts of the world differ from each other in their attitudes towards the actual connections with India, Indian religions and cultures and especially
Indianness that is directly related to psychological and social effects of dislocation and displacement.

Diaspora continues to be in critical scholarship to address the phenomena of movement and the concept of homeland becomes increasingly prevalent to understand it. While defining diaspora, there is an imperative need to define ‘home’ as the foundation from which diaspora builds its pillar. But it is not easy to define home because it is rooted in physical sense that is homeland. Homeland involves the imaginary boundaries of nation-state which is grounded on the ideas of nation, state, and identity. Thus homeland can be imagined beyond its material parts. Diaspora exists only as an extension from a distinct geographic locale that is nation/state which is the original home of the dispersed people. James Clifford argues that the idea of a bounded territory being necessary to the diasporic experience is not always true. Diasporas connect multiple communities of a dispersal population. Systematic border crossings may be part of this interconnection, but multi-local diaspora cultures are not necessarily defined by a specific geopolitical boundary” (Clifford: 304). Thus Clifford expresses the ability to create connection with the lost homeland that transcends traditional boundaries.

Clifford also argues that an actual return to a homeland is not always a deciding indicator of the diasporic experience. He examines that the Jewish diasporic experience has not been historically motivated by a return to a homeland. According to him Jewish diaspora is not rooted in an actual homeland but they find an understanding of home which is cultivated through “cultural forms, kinship relations, business circuits and
travel trajectories as well as through loyalty to the religious centers of the diaspora (305). In other words, Jewish diaspora is not characterized by a longing for specific homeland but influenced by the notion of home that arises from the lost homeland. Clifford’s re-theorization of diaspora is important because it shows the shifting tendencies of diasporas from an ‘originary’ homeland to the existence of multiple homelands. However, it is necessary to rethink some of the basic assumptions of diaspora that depend on connectivity and communication in a global world. Roza Tsagarousianon maintains that “diasporas should be seen not as given communities, a logical, albeit deterritorialized, extension of an ethnic or national group, but as imagined communities, continuously reconstructed and reinvented (2004: 52).

To redefine ‘diaspora’, it is necessary to focus on Edward Said’s problematizing of exile in ‘The Mind of Winter’, an essay which contains his personal reflections of exile and homeland. Here, Said defines exile as ‘the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home’ (1984: 49). According to Said, if narrative of the homeland is influenced by his identity as a Palestinian exile, the loss of stability, of geography and continuity of land created by the Palestinian’s enforced separation from his ‘true home’ is fundamental to his conception of identity. He emphasizes that exiles are ‘cut off from their roots, their land, and their past’ (51). Again Said focuses on the dialectics of loss that shapes the figure of the exile in his book After the Last Sky. He observes “exile is a series of portraits without names, without contexts” (1986: 12). Thus Said emphasizes that Palestinian identity without a Palestinian homeland powerfully evokes the cultural, geographical and psychic homelessness experienced by the exile.
However, while Said evokes exile in the same terms that Safran formulates diaspora as a condition of terminal loss and separation from one’s ‘true’ home, he shifts by foregrounding its productive tensions. And this Shift is significant to serve the binary distinctions between exile and homeland. For Said, exile’s separation from their ‘homeland’ allows to open up new ways of perceiving one’s relationship with the world by crossing borders, breaking barriers of thought and experience (54-55). This crossing of borders is not only the geographical borders, but also the negotiation of the personal boundaries between past and present. Said’s definition of exiles as being located between cultures and nations, points out the productive ambivalences of exile. In contrast to the sense of belonging to one culture or one home, exiles are aware of at least two inhabiting cultures and identity since the experience of home is stretched across plural, ‘simultaneous dimensions’ (55).

In *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (1985:77), Said exposes his feelings of loss, alienations and nostalgia for the homeland of his ‘beginnings’ to establish a new relationship with his adopted homeland of America. Thus Said emphasizes that as a starting point, beginnings are always left behind and it is ‘continuities’ that go forward with their beginnings. Said invokes in his hyphenated identity as a Palestinian-American that in-between space, which allows for the existence of more than one homeland and the celebration of a heterogeneous cultural identity. He says “No one today is purely one thing” (407). Thus Said’s own biography itself problematizes the binary relationship between exile and ‘originary’ homeland.
The idea of difference has drawn the attention to retheorize the diaspora because the presence of this difference helps to understand the specific way in which it intervenes in the construction of ‘originary’ home. Angelika Bammer’s elaboration on the cultural displacement is useful to bring the complexities of this sense of difference, which is not merely ‘otherness’ (1994: xii). Bammer uses the term borrowing from Jacques Derrida (1979), for whom displacement in meaning-making process involves a ‘pushing aside’. Therefore, meaning is never complete, but keeps on shifting to get some additional meanings. It is possible only through difference. If the difference lies at the cultural identity, then meaning of culture disseminates along endless chains of signifier which is an enactment of diaspora. And this difference underlines diasporic narratives of cultural identity which is never complete, but always deferred. Thus the presence of difference puts identity in motion to incorporate new or additional meanings.

It is within the context of the changing social relation, political crisis, histories of displacement and cross-border flows of people in which the complexities of ‘home’ and ‘nation’ lies. In this regard Patrica Gabriel observes, “While home as a material and emotional securities very often projected as a space of pastoral stability in the discourse of anti-colonial nationalism, the increasingly diasporic context of the nation has fundamentally problemized that definition (1999:11). In the field of cultural and literary studies, the contemporary scholarship has drawn attention to the instability of home. In this context Angelika Bammer notes that ‘this instability is manifesting itself on a staggering --some believe, unprecedented--scale both globally and locally. On all levels and in all places, it seems ‘home’ in the traditional sense is either disintegrating or being radically redefined’ (1992: viii).
While the traditional concept of home indicates the community of time and space, the potential of minority ethnic communities who are temporally bound and homogeneous, for them the construction of home has crucial implications on the narratives and discourses of the nation. Then the question arises regarding the concept of home in the context of diaspora. Thus the study is grounded to demonstrate the ways diaspora can offer a resistant as an empowering conception of nation for the people of third world. In this context Steven Vertove (2009: 405) puts forward the view that, the first generation of diaspora longs for the homeland, exhibiting their diasporic consciousness. She observes that while concerning global diasporas, there is considerable discussion surrounding a kind of diaspora consciousness marked by dual or multiple identifications. Hence there are depictions of individuals’ awareness of decentred attachments, of being simultaneously ‘home away from home’, ‘here and there’ (450). The majority seem to maintain several identities that link them simultaneously to more than one nation. The second generation exhibits ‘transnational consciousness’ because the characters of second generation did not undergo a major dispersion and they are not fixated on a lost homeland. Khachig Tololian(1991:5) observes, in his editorial preface to the founding issue of the journal, Diaspora that ‘diaspora are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment which interrogate the privileged homogeneity of the nation/ state.

According to Arif Dirlik (2001:352), the new diasporas have relocated themselves here and there, and consequently borders and boundaries have been confounded. And the flow has became at once homogenizing and heterogenizing; some groups share in common global culture regardless of location while others take refuge
in cultural legacies that are far apart from one another as they were at the origin of modernity. Therefore, the words like exile, diaspora, migration, dislocation and displacement are used to express fractured existence of people and the ‘diaspora’ refers to a state of mind that manifests itself through strategies of assimilation and resistance within the new culture.

Associated with the experience of migration, a diasporic person leaves his/her own country in search of a free land for exercising his/her potential peacefully without any fear. The migrant is culturally dislocated from his/her home and is uprooted from the original location in search of relocation in the foreign land. Diasporic study is therefore grounded upon the experience of expatriation by the dislocated migrants who straddle between nationality and exile. Though it has been said that the term ‘diasporas’ refers to immigrant, but it is not one substitute for another. ‘Diaspora’ essentially means the worst experience of dislocated peoples who live in a sense of loss and with a nostalgic feeling. It directly refers to the concept of ‘home’ and to the particular class of immigrant who is unable to go back and tolerably live in the ‘home’ of adaptation. In recent times the migration of people causes problems of cultural differences, cultural dilemma, problem of settlement in a new country, generation differences and transformation of identities and these problems lead to re-examination of the relationship between self and the culture of both the home country and adopted country.

Diasporas never return to their homeland because homeland is a kind of mental image for them. Their physical return to their homeland stands like a rock between their
mental image and the visual reality which fails to produce a mental equivalent of their physical return. Therefore, they are alienated twice and suffer from ‘double consciousness’ (Bhabha, 1994:9). The displacement that had taken place did not necessarily lead to Jews returning to Palestine even after the initial cause of the exile had lost its significance. Diasporic space is not natural but one has to negotiate it painfully between the various contradictions of ethnicity, religion, and nationalism. For example, the breaking up of Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, clashes between the Black population and Indian population in Trinidad, between Israel and Palestine are the contradictions that took place because of the catholic occurrences. In this context Avtar Brah puts forward her idea that diasporic space is the intersectionality of Diaspora, border, and dislocation as a point of confluence of economic, political, cultural and psychic process. To Brah, diasporic space is a “highly contested site” (1996:208).

Diaspora not only experiences a movement across the border of a country, but also the experiences traversing of boundaries and barriers of space, time, race, culture, language and history. Benzi Zhang in his essay “Identity in Diaspora and Diaspora in Writing: the poetics of cultural transrelation” (2000: 125) emphasizes that as a multifold journey over various discursive and non-discursive domain, diaspora enacts a socio-cultural practice that thrives on a process of constant resignification of the established assumptions and meanings of identity. S. Kalsey has compared diasporans to a ‘migratory bird’:

We

the migratory bird are here in this season

thinking
we’ll fly back to our home
for sure
No one knows
Which invisible cage imprisons us?
And the flight begins to die slowly
In our wings (1990: 40).

From the poetry of Kalsey, one can observes that diasporas are stranded ‘migratory
birds because they are strangers from elsewhere who, without a sense of belonging,
ever feel at home in a new country yet unable to return to their homeland. On the other
hand, for Iain Chambers diaspora is a ‘drama of the stranger’: ‘Cut off from the
homelands of tradition, experiencing a constantly challenged identity, the stranger is
perpetually required to make herself at home in an interminable discussion between a
scattered historical inheritance and a heterogeneous present’ (1994: 6). Here both
historical inheritance and heterogeneous present are translocated into diaspora discourse
which refers to both border-crossing and border re-defining and involves not only the
crossing of borders but also travel across the multiple boundaries of space, time, race,
culture, language and history.

Diasporas search a new space for cross-cultural negotiation and to articulate their
identity, they dislocate in various ways. They constantly try to establish themselves in-
between ‘homeness’ and ‘homeless-ness’ (Zhang: 26) and learn how to relocate
themselves in-between the ‘homes’. Julia Kristeva observes this relocation of diaspora
as a necessary strategy to ‘live with the others’ (1991:195). In this context, Zhang
observes that diasporas refer not only to the process of migration, but also to the double relationship between two different cultural homes/origins (126).

The notion of diaspora has played an important role in cultural studies that not only charted the history of displaced communities but also employed that history as a condition for cultural criticism. For Homi K. Bhabha (1994:172), culture is always diasporized. He observes that Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement, whether they are the ‘middle passage’ (172) of slavery and indenture, the ‘voyage out’ (172) of the civilizing mission, the fraught accommodation of Third World migration to the West after the Second World War, or the traffic of economic and political refugees within and outside the Third World. The transnational dimension of cultural transformation—migration, diaspora, displacement, relocation—makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification. Thus Bhabha emphasizes that the culture is transnational because it is rooted in histories of displacement and this transnational conception of culture has the significance to reconceptualize the theories of diaspora.

Again, Bhabha argues in his essay, “Dissemination: Time, Narrative and the Margins of Modern Nation” (1990: 291) that in-between space of the margins occupied by diasporic communities is an empowered one and such space is empowered because of the difference of displacement of areas from which the cultural identity is negotiated. In this in-between space, the present is marked with discontinuity and ever-shifting domain. Bhabha’s idea of in-between space is the hybrid interaction between different
cultures and histories that makes both negotiation and revision of culture possible. Thus, the in-between space becomes the space of productivity and Bhabha calls it “Third Space”.

For Bhabha, diasporas are “Gatherings of exiles and émigrés and refugees; gathering on the edge of ‘foreign’ cultures; gathering at the frontiers; gatherings in the ghettos or cafes of city centers; gathering in the half-life, half-light of foreign tongues; gathering the signs of approval and acceptance, degrees, discourses, disciplines, gathering the memories of underdevelopment, of other worlds lived retroactively; gathering the past in a ritual of revival; gathering the present” (Bhabha 1994:139). Diasporas inhabit spaces and their intercultural experiences constitute them as hyphenated, hybrid subjects. This self-reflecting hybridity is common to all unsettled hegemonic relations as it focuses on the process of negotiation of cultures that in Bhabha’s words “insurgent act of cultural translation”. Therefore, Bhabha thinks that the third space occupied by the diasporic subject is filled with creative possibilities.

Stuart Hall in his seminal essay “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” (P.Mongia:1997) emphasizes that the cultural identity of diasporic persons reflect the common historical experience and a shared cultural code of being one people under the banner of exile. The migrants constitute the third world and tend to create the poetics of exile and the imaginary space and home; and obviously, the concept of ‘third home’ becomes the only solace for them. Their diasporic consciousness is associated with an emotional and psychological state of being—struggling between regression and progression, dislocation and attempt for relocation. This experience of inhabiting two spaces --‘history specific’
and ‘culture specific’-- yields to subtle tension of dislocation and alienation. In this connection, Salman Rushdie has aptly brought out the agony and ecstasy of being an expatriate: “Exiles or immigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt” (1991: 4).

An immigrant, according to Rushdie, is caught between identity crisis and cross-cultural communication and hence develops a double vision, a hybrid glance to combat such a marginalized existence. Constructing multiple identities and developing a hybrid vision, eventually becomes an ongoing process of adaptation for an immigrant. In his essay 'Imaginary Homelands’ Rushdie has further reflected on this issue: “Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools ... But however ambiguous and shifting this ground may be, it is not an infertile territory for a writer to occupy. If literature is in part the business of finding new angles at which to enter reality, then once again our distance, our long geographical perspective, may provide us with such angles” (1991: 14). This openness of perception and double vision comes as a by-product of diaspora and helps an expatriate to make the recognition that the world is an open platform for different interpretation of experience.

One of the important aspects of diasporic consciousness is the creation of a minority community, and in the context of Indian diaspora, a minority ‘little India’ in the foreign land where people share certain common characteristics for searching an identity and adjustment between ‘home’, the culture of origin and ‘world’, the culture of
adaptation. (Safran, 1991: 84) They retain a collective vision or a share myth about their original homeland—its physical location, history and achievement. Further, diasporic consciousness is constantly haunted by fear—a fear that they won’t be fully accepted by their host society. And at one point of time they are forced to accept their ancestral homeland as the true ideal and nourish the hope of eventual return as and when conditions are appropriate and conducive. They further believe that they should collectively be committed to restore their homeland and their writings continue to long for it in one way or another and while doing so, their authentic communal consciousness gives birth to a kind of temporal solidarity based on mutual relationship.

Their search for cultural identity tends to establish themselves not only as types but also as what Stuart Hall calls “individuals, at once anchorless, colourless, rootless and stateless” (P. Mongia, 1997: 113). Professor Hall intends to appropriate these rootless individuals as a ‘race of angels’(113) constantly put in a state of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ strutting between ‘what they really are/were’ and ‘what they have/should have a become in the foreign land’. Out of this oscillation is born the diasporic person of the new world, and to Stuart Hall, the new person marks the beginning of diversity, hybridity and difference (120). The emphasis on difference is reminiscent of the identity crisis, cultural encounter, double vision, hybrid glance and constructing multiple identities. All these eventually become an ongoing process for adaptation experienced by immigrant sensibility and diasporic consciousness.

It has since grown to encompass movements beyond this historical exodus, to those of other peoples, namely the Black African diaspora that continued throughout the
sixteenth century and into the early nineteenth that propagated by the legalized slave trade of the time. Diaspora has also applied to the Greek and Armenian dispersions, among others (Clifford, 1997: 303). Now the term commonly applied to contemporary movements of people along with the analytical framework that used to understand movements in other fields of study such as literature, film etc.

It is well noted that Asian diaspora constitutes one of the largest among the diasporas. While talking about the Chinese diaspora the mass emigration takes place from China to developing countries such as USA, Australia, South Africa, South East Asia, Malaya and other places due to wars and starvation. The largest Asian diaspora in Southeast Asia is Indian diaspora which constitutes a diverse, heterogeneous and eclectic global community representing different languages, religions and cultures. But they are bound together with the same intrinsic values. Twentieth century witnesses movements of millions of people to Easten Russia, central Asia and Siberia often by government actions. During the World War Second many Jews fled to Western Europe and America and later other Eastern Europe refuges moved to West, away from Soviet annexation after the Second World War. The Soviet Union and Communist control in Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia expelled many ethnic Germans who moved to Western Europe and United States.

Any analysis of diasporic literature of East must begin with thorough going discussion on South Asian diaspora with special reference to Indian diaspora. The South Asian diaspora includes millions of people in South Africa, Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Fiji, Singapore, Malaysia and other countries who left India and many of
Indians left to the developing country like Australia, England, America, Canada and New Zealand. But the Indian diaspora gains its significance all over the world along with a history that started after the movement of Buddhist missionary or even further back to the time of the Indus Valley civilization.

The elements of diaspora can be located in the two great epics of India and behind the exile of Rama and Lakhmana in *Ramayana* and of the five Pandava brothers in the *Mahabharata* who move from place to place in search of shelter and secured home, one can locate the earliest instances of Indian diasporic literature. The original creation of Indian diaspora was the impact of imperialism that had appeared in the forms of indenture labourers. They were used to work as the substitute of slave in different British colonies in Caribbean after the abolition of slavery. This practice of taking Indians led to social discrimination and was bound to extreme control. This was a process that involved hardship of life to survive and therefore it changed the sensibility of the people for better way of living. Bhikhu Parekh has pointed out the typical nature of Indian diasporas and their ability to sustain themselves by comparing them with a banyan tree: “… like the banyan tree, the traditional symbol of Indian way of life, he spreads out his roots in several soils, drawing nourishment from one where the rest dry up. Far from being homeless, he has several homes, and that is the only way he has increasingly come to feel at home in the world” (1993:106). Though Bhikhu Parekh’s description on the nature of Indian diaspora indicates the capability for survival but this kind of survival is not satisfactory.
The earliest Indian diaspora was not spreading out of roots but it painfully grew for survival and this kind of survival creates the diasporic sensibility of people. Today a large number of Indians moved to other countries in search of job opportunities. This type of diasporic Indians belong to the category of high qualified professionals and they have made their migration by own choice. Even many writers migrate across the countries in search of audience over their writings in English. For instance, writer like Derek Walcott keeps his multicultural commitments in three countries- that are his African origin, Caribbean birth and finally America. In this sense V. S. Naipaul is not different. He also left his Indian origin and his birth place Trinidad and chose to live in England. Moreover, marriage is one of the factors of many diasporic Indians that has altered a lot in its internal structure resulting in interracial and intercultural social relation and has marked racial and cultural aspects in diasporic Indian-English writing. For instance, interracial marriage in the diaspora mediates the works of Bharati Mukherjee, Meena Alexander, Dibakaruni and Sujatta Bhatt. Many of the Indian Diasporic writers come from non-Christian background and continue to adopt their identities and backgrounds in relation to religion. This diversity of religions of the authors and their ethnic, linguistic, regional and cultural origins make the diasporic literature strong and colourful. Thus Diasporic Literature becomes a useful resource to study the challenges of diaspora and the strategies of negotiation.

Globalisation has brought out different types of migration by achieving various responses worldwide and the homogeneous effect of globalization has reached various regions within its reach. The twenty first century observes the extraordinary movement of people all over the world. In this context the word diaspora searches for a new
meaning of relocation of people who are away from their homeland. In this connection Hall emphasizes in an interview that “in the era of globalization, we are all becoming diasporic” (1992:402). The nature of a diasporic person is depended on the type of migration. It may be within the nation or outside the nation and these types of migration can be classified as forced migration, partially forced migration and voluntary migration. The forced migratory people are those who moved from their homeland either by the state or when any social institution takes power over them. Deportation and slave trade are the forms of forced migration. During the Second World War millions of Jews were deported by the Nazis and in the time of colonization slave trade was practiced for long time in Africa, Middle East and Europe especially in the agricultural colonies.

The partially forced migration was executed through administrative transfer of staff in the colonial administration as well as in government and private companies. Moreover, the refuges are one of the types of partially forced migration. One of the examples of partially forced migration is the movement of people from India to Pakistan during 1947-48. The third type of migration willingly migrants and joins the diaspora to seek better life and adopts an established social pattern. The most significant development of voluntary migration is the selective migration of people such as physician, engineers and scientists to the developed countries in search of job and to develop a better standard of living, many people have migrated from Asian and African countries to the western countries like U.S.A., Canada, Australia and U.K. These migrants face many problems in the diasporic society. Moreover, they have the feeling
of being marginalized in the adopted society and there is a crisis of identity generated by a fractured consciousness.

The important distinction between forced migration and voluntary migration is that the feeling of insecurity, rootlessness and alienation compels the forced migrants to maintain the cultural practices in orthodox way. But the voluntary migrants are aware of the situation and they are already mentally prepared for the displacement. The migratory problems depend on the immigrants’ adoptability, mentality and flexibility. In this context Uma Parameswaran (2004) has suggested that gender plays a significant role in defining the responses of the individual in a diasporic situation (32). Therefore one can say that the question of diaspora arises from the relationship between place and identity, tension between internationalism and nationalism, and the way the interaction between culture and literature takes place. The terms ‘host’ and ‘immigrant culture’ raise the question as to how the overlapping condition of voluntary and forced migration is trying to remap cultural identity politics, literariness and literary text. On the landscape of migration and exile exclusions, the articulation of diasporas have found their way to literary writings. There are various responses to migration, political persecution, ethnicity that are articulated in literature and produced places where the diasporic communities do exist.

The immigrant writers or the expatriates travel from one place to another along with their imagination, culture and psyche that cause a sort of conflict of fluid identity and they find themselves in a dilemma of nothingness and dream of an alternative world by unchanging tradition, culture and home. Their tension helps them
to recall the memories which become most significant factor for them to reconstitute the past to create their discourse.

Living in diaspora means forced or voluntary exile that leads to the identity confusion and problems of identification and alienation. Therefore the issue of identity forms the core of diasporic consciousness, and the moment one becomes an expatriate, he/she needs to define himself/herself in the new environment. In this attempt of self definition, one may either assimilate identity with the host country thereby severing all ties with the native country, or may see the people around him/her as 'the other'. Within cultural assimilation and cultural alienation, an expatriate tries to adjust and depict such confusions of life and living, declining values, loss of compassion and trust, and submits to the new environment by adopting the strategy of “excessive belonging”. The diasporic person is neither in West nor in India but at home and thus becomes what Homi K. Bhabha called in *The Location of Culture* ‘unhomed’ (1994: 114). Thus the concept of home becomes important segment in all diasporic writing. For instance, Naipaul portraits the character of Ralph Sing in *The Mimic Man* who finds ‘home’ nowhere after shifting between the West Indies and London. Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* (2003) describes Gogol Ganguli’s meta-Indian home which consists of a Hindu patriarchal home but looks like any typical American home. Sudesh Mishra in “*From Sugar to Masala: Writing by the Indian Diaspora*” says: “The movement from Seepersad Naipaul to Meera Syal suggests an important rethinking of the concept of ‘home’ with the diaspora, especially as this occurs against the backdrop of the global shift from the centering or centripetal logic or monopoly capitalism to the decentering or centrifugal logic of transnational capitalism (2003:294).” When diasporic writing
tries to reflect the real and imagined worlds, as Salman Rushdie puts it in *Imaginary Homeland*, it “is obliged to deal in broken mirrors, some of whose fragments have lost” (1991:198). Thus unsettled and alienated people created by the contemporary diasporic writers longing for a real or imaginary homeland, a permanent or temporary return.

Technological development such as new media allows for the flow of information, and people tend to transcend borders thereby resulting in greater exchange. As a result, individuals are allowed to re-imagine themselves and adopt multiple affiliations while altering existing ones. Thus, individuals do not have to identify with those who fall inside the same boundaries; they may identify more with those who are located outside their borders. Diasporic communities are emblematic of the times because they are constantly negotiating their identities within the borders of their adopted home as well as across borders with their homeland. Robin Cohen says: “Diasporas are positioned somewhere between nation-states and ‘traveling cultures’ in that they involve dwelling in a nation-state physical sense, but traveling in an astral or spiritual sense that falls outside that nation-state’s space/time zone” (1997:55). Although all diasporas negotiate their identities between their homeland and adopted home, the differences exist as to their affinities. For example, one diaspora may identify with the territory and culture of its homeland while another may only identify with the culture. Differences also manifest themselves in the diasporic social networks that are formed.
Diasporic Literature can be acknowledged as varied and today multicultural literature is considered as the major source in which the rich cultural dynamics of modern society has been reflected. It is generally acknowledged that the literature produced in the countries like America and England is considered as multicultural. The writers in America are Arab American, Asian American and African who have contributed a large chunk of diaspora with distinct sensibility. These diasporic writers are differing from each other in their attitudes towards host country. Early Arab immigrants writers like Ameen Rihani, Khalil Gibran, Mikhil Naimy and Elia Abu Madi are originally from Lebanon and Syria. Khalil Gibran’s *The Book of Khalil* (1911) deals with the immigrant experience. His works are profoundly philosophical and his *The Prophet* makes him the greatest of poets and philosophers. He freed Arab American writers of their self consciousness along with immigrant experiences.

From the feeling of alienation, displacement, exile and longing for home, the African diaspora literature is quite rich. The African writer Awoonor represents the recovery of repressed history of the black Africans. The Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka presents the struggle of Africans for their nationalism and black ancestry. Similarly Ata Aidoe presents the failure of return of the African American women to Africa where she faces rejection. There she challenges the myth of smooth return of African American to their homeland. Likewise the black American writers Tony Morrison and Rita Dove contributed to literature emphasizing their diasporic consciousness. Moreover, Maya Angelou, Ralph Ellison and Langston Hughes are notable black voices who present the cultural and mental disorder of the colonized.
In this way the literature of diaspora focuses the experiences of displacement and the otherness of the other, the new phenomena of hybridity, crisis of language, culture and double consciousness. Identity crisis, East-West encounter, living in-between spaces and cultures, homelessness, rootlessness are the common themes of postcolonial literature through which the diasporic sensibility of a person/writer set and the diasporic sensibility constitutes the core concerned of for most of the Indian diasporic writers like V. S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Anita Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, Vikram Seth and Bharati Mukherjee. They have successfully presented the diasporic consciousness of immigrants who have been physically as well as culturally alienated from their roots. They have tasted the bitter experience of expatriation and immigration by straddling between the culture of their origin and the culture of their adoption. Their cultural affinity with India makes them alien in other countries where they make repeated attempts to transmute and transform identity, and their diasporic consciousness is constantly obsessed with thoughts of their homeland, their state of exile and nostalgic anchoring of the past through memory, fantasy, narratives of trauma and myths of torture. In this connection, Amitav Ghosh (1989: 73) explains that the modern Indian diaspora represents an important force in the world culture. Literary culture of the diaspora is also an important social, political and literary force within India. He admits that V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie and R. K. Ramanujan are the finest writers writing in the English language. But Jhumpa Lahiri proclaims that the process of Indian diasporic writing started with V.S. Naipaul, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and Anita Desai; Salman Rushdie continues it through the present
generation of writers who are not diasporic in its true sense but chosen to live abroad.

The diasporic writings which are also known as 'expatriate writings' or 'immigrant writings' give voice to the traumatic experiences of the writers owing to the clash of two cultures or the racial discrimination they undergo. Immigration proves a pleasant experience only to a few immigrants who succeed in assimilating themselves with the new geographical, cultural, social and psychological environment. To most of the diaspora writers, immigration is not a delectable experience. They often find themselves between two cultures. The feeling of nostalgia, a sense of loss and anxiety to reinvent home obsess them, which finds an expression in their writings.

The phenomenon of multi-culturalism is responsible for the production of diasporic writing and also one of the aspects of postmodernism which proclaims multicultural and multi-ethnic societies. It promotes the politics of difference. In this respect, identity is not essential, rather it is fluid and shifting that shaped by multiple sources and assuming multiple forms. As Avtar Brah (1996:183) puts it in Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities, distinct diaspora communities are created out of the ‘confluence of narratives’ of different journeys from the ‘old country’ to the new which create the sense of a shared history. Differences of gender, class, culture, religion and language make diaspora spaces dynamic and shifting and it is open to repeated construction and reconstruction. Diasporic writing draws our attention to an important aspect of our time in which responsibilities of the people go across the national boundaries. The new spaces and identities and relationships have to be created
which help the people to move across boundaries and to engage difference and otherness as part of a discourse. Thus diasporic writing focuses the intellectual’s need to move away from a mere language of critique for a redefinition as part of a language of transformation and hope. It is only on this part that struggle is against racism, class structures and other forms of oppression.

Indian diasporic writing has been attributed through different labels such as ‘Trishanku’ (Uma Parameswaran, 2002:5) image from the Indian mythology which suggest dangling, uncertain identity neither here nor there. It also used to define people who live in-between space or more precisely the immigrant. Uma Parameswaran’s novel Mangoes on the Maple (2002) focuses on the assimilation of the immigrants and their efforts to transcend their trishanku state. The novel is based on the life of an Indian family who migrated to Canada where a large number of people migrate from different countries. India is one of the countries which lead to the emergence of Indo Canadian writings. Further diasporic writers expose themselves as migrants, plural, hybrid, expatriate and immigrant to invest these words with personal experiences. Salman Rushdie in Imaginary Homeland (1991: 9) exclusively explores the migrant writers as endowed with a double/plural, insider/outsider perspective, whose hybrid predicament can be universalized into art with globally accepted theme.

Bharati Mukherjee in the ‘introduction’ to Darkness (1985) distinguishes between ‘expatriate’ and ‘immigrant’ by emphasizing that “immigrant were lost soul ” and the expatriates knew all too well “ what they were and what foul fate had fallen them”. The use of the English language is one of the factors to evoke the alienated
consciousness of the writer. But since late 1970’s after expatriation, immigration to the West, the trauma of uprooting, the diasporic consciousness and the loss of ‘home’ and identity have preoccupied many Indians who are writing in English. Again Bharati Mukherjee in _Jasmine_ (1989) explores the issues involving immigration and identity with particular focus on United States and Canada. Her study of the mind of a frustrated wife in New York reflects through the novel _Wife_ (1976).

Meena Alexander (Hindu Literary Magazine, December 1997) has related the Indian diaspora to freedom and postcoloniality. The very idea of diasporic literature has its relationship with the motherland that provides nostalgic feelings and adopted land and its people which give rise to the conflicts and double consciousness. And this is the basis of all diaspora writings which reflects through sense of alienation, exile, lonliness, cultural disorder, rejection and the effort of assimilation with expression of home again which become outpouring of nostalgia and longing. For immigrants the sense of dislocation and separation become the common factors as they live between two worlds from where they look at the past and future with the feelings of rootlessness. Immigration is a process that involves uprooting and re-rooting. Thus the major quest for the immigrants is to search the roots and the notion of in-betweenness brings a desire for them to have a home of their own which becomes “a mythic place of desire… a place of no return” (McLeod, 2000: 9).

History becomes the major preoccupation of the writings of recent Indian writers in English. There is a view that many contemporary novelists writing in English are overburdened with history. Amitav Ghosh explores the relationship between human
destiny and historical events. In his novel *The Shadow lines*, he deliberately interweaves personal history with a nation’s destiny, giving a poignant story of the partition. In the diasporic writing, the recurrent theme of comparing ‘home’ culture with that of ‘new’ culture is found. Vinay Dharwadkar in *The Historical Formation of Indian Literature* (2003) aptly brings the migrants and itinerant writers who have emerged in Indian writing in English in most of the historical phases starting with Toru Dutt, Raja Rammohan Rao, Mulk Raj Anand to present day writers.

Though the term diaspora originally associated with the dispersal of Jews from their homeland, but now the term has been widely used as the synonym for expatriates, emigrants and exiles in the colonial period. When we look at the history we find that ‘diaspora’ cannot be separated from ‘colonialism’ because it made people displaced across the world physically and emotionally. Thus colonialism made these displaced people unhoused, having the feeling of rootlessness, alienation and cultural insecurity.

The power of Colonialism has the capacity to make people displaced who live in-between two cultures. In this connection, Bhabha (1994) observes that these displaced people move from home culture to an alien culture leading to an assimilated culture (407). According to Edward Said, “diasporas is the person who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner, he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong, but he is perfect to whom entire world is a foreign place (1984: 54).” The Indian expatriates in Trinidad live among the heterogeneous group formed by the Africans, native Trinidadian and other displaced groups are still under the domain of colonization. Their separation from native culture and living in-between two cultures
have a great impact on their psyche that allows them to search constantly their home and identity. Their continuous sense of dislocation brings suffering in both original home and adopted home.

As a postcolonial writer, V. S. Naipaul examines the motifs of loss of identity, cultural conflict, psychological crises, alienation, and rootlessness of diasporas in his works. At the same time, while depicting a particular society, he not only examines his search for selfhood and nation, but also insists on the need of tradition, myth and history as the external starting points for the ‘self’ to become real. He also feels the necessity of defining a personal identity in one’s own life and therefore creates determined characters in his fiction to expose their loss of identity in various ways.

Naipaul’s works are decidedly relevant in the present situation in which the diasporic person feels the state of being an exile-the pain of homelessness and loss of roots. His queer combination of circumstances relating to Indian, British and African identities shows that his search for identity is not within a particular country and culture, but goes beyond geography and history. He has an urge to articulate his fluid, multiple and unstable identities in terms of his unique postcolonial cultural perspective and makes his works the record of his exiled life and explores through subjectivity, geography, and language a leaning towards multicultural and fluid identity. His works like The Mystic Masseur, A House for Mr. Biswas, A Bend in the River, Half a Life, An Area of Darkness, In a Free State, and Finding the centre, have been selected for an in depth analysis of Naipaul’s search for roots and his formulation of identity in the backdrop of the postcolonial concepts of culture and diaspora.
The present study is grounded upon Naipaul’s depiction/treatment of the different conditions of diaspora that influence identity formation and negotiation in the backdrop of the postcolonial societies of India, England and Africa. Naipaul’s urge to articulate fluid, multiple and unstable identities are critically examined so as to ascertain whether he envisages the concept of a confident diaspora or otherwise. Further, it would be profitable to examine how his search for identity, roots and home in various communities/places makes him a layered/fractured exile, because identity is not fixed, but created.

The present study is an attempt to explore the concept of diasporic identity/sensibility that the authors of post-colonial literature are constantly preoccupied with and to present Naipaul’s belongingness to the diaspora of exclusivism and his treatment of the questions of belonging, home, and career as symbol of both heritage and values. Naipaul expresses his life of exile through his characters and the study has identified the problems of existence faced by these characters who struggle for self-assertion. To present an authentic picture of social divisions, economic conditions and cultural expectations of the people, the study has adopted the notion of diaspora as social practice on the basis of an analysis of Naipaul’s novels, travel writings, essays and stories.

In order to achieve the evaluation of literary genius of Naipaul and to trace his diasporic sensibility, the study attempts to explore Naipaul’s literary works. His works have been explored through critical analysis and interpretation, and by analyzing various critical sources and the texts of V.S. Naipaul, it has highlighted the issues relating to postcolonial identities and diasporic consciousness. His works are
elaborately discussed to perceive Naipaul’s diasporic sensibility which is constantly evolving. The novels, stories, travel writings and essays of Naipaul are studied with third world setting involving postcolonial social and political background.


• Old Testament, Deut. xvii. 25. Print.


